Reviewer’s report

Title: Development of a set of process and structure indicators for palliative care: the Europall project

Version: 6 Date: 10 September 2012

Reviewer: H. Roeline W. Pasman

Reviewer’s report:

Thank you for the opportunity to re review this article.

I think the paper has improved. However, unfortunately, to me it remains unclear at several points.

The framework used to structure the QI’s is not presented clearly. In their response to the reviewers they refer to p3 line 14, but this is about the recommendations of the European Council. On p5 line 18, ‘the framework’ is mentioned, but it is not clear which framework and on p6 line 9-10 reference to figure 1 (?) and ref 11 are made. On p7 line 14 is referred to Table 1.

I would prefer that the framework previously made by the authors (ref 11) is presented more clearly and prominent in the methods sections, for instance after line 18, p3, by giving all domains here and refering to ref 11.

It remains unclear to me how the former review is included. Which (and how many) QI’s were included from this former review? The found structure and process QI’s in the domain ‘Structure and Process of Care’? Are the presented 541 papers all new ones or do they include papers from the former review?

On p5 line 20-21 is stated that grey literature was searched if a (sub)domain was not covered. For which (sub)domains were no QI’s found and was the grey literature used? Adding this information gives readers inside in underexposed domains in literature. May be this can be added to p7 line 1-4 and in the figures 1 and 2.

On p6 line 10-12 it is mentioned that project members could suggest new QI’s based on grey literature. I would also add in the results paragraph how many new QI’s were suggested and developed based on this grey literature, and which QI’s this contains. Especially since including grey literature is mentioned as a strenght of the study (p8 line22-24)

On p4 line 2-3 is mentioned that in the former review, clinical indicators were overrepresented over indicators that assess organisational issues. However, this review found 57 outcome indicators, 82 process indicators and 5 structure indicators were found. In line with my questions how the former review was included, it is not clear to me how many and which QI’s were included from the former review.
**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests